**SUGGESTIONS FOR SURVIVING COVID 19**

The COVID 19 pandemic is affecting each of us differently, some more than others. A central part of coping constructively is that you need to strive to maintain a sense of control over your life.

Get “facts” from a reputable website like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or the World Health Organization (WHO). Read them to stay current but don’t dwell on the issue by reading and worrying about it all day long. Be informed; then move on.

*Your life has been changed by a pandemic that you have no control over.*

*What you need to consider is that you have a choice.*

*You can be overwhelmed and paralyzed by it or you can grab the bull by the horns and do things that will help you get thru this crisis.*

**When you choose to take control, you will gain control.**

Enhance your resilience factor and be strategic:

* It won’t last forever. Remember your present situation is only temporary.
* Don’t shame yourself for experiencing anxiety. Being anxious on occasion is normal.
* Keep a positive mindset. When you can’t change circumstances, you must change your mindset.
* Reach out to friends and family. Lean on supportive friends for assistance. Stay away from negative folks as much as possible.
* Keep in mind the tough times you’ve gotten through before: Death of a parent? Divorce? A job loss? Remember times in your past when you’ve gotten through difficulties and that you’ll get through this, too!
* Plan a doable project. Planning is important. Is there a project around the house you’ve been putting off that you have time for now. A project that would give you something to look forward to and offer a sense of accomplishment later when the pandemic is over.
* Read a relaxing book, listen to soothing music, do what helps you relax.
* Pray the Serenity Prayer. “God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.
* Use humor. What makes you laugh? Don’t be afraid to binge watch some favorite TV show or movie that really make you laugh. Sometimes humor is the best medicine.
* Embrace your spiritual side. Regardless of your religion, denomination, etc., embracing faith and hope has gotten many a person through a rough patch in life. Talk to a counselor, pastor, and/or take advantage of this time to really look within.

**Perhaps the most important thing is to develop a constructive and useful routine.**

* **Set daily goals.**
* **Take a few minutes to plan your next day each evening.**
* **Make your daily goals achievable.**
* **Don’t set yourself up for failure by being too demanding.**
* **Don’t set your goals that require only limited effort.**
* **Keep your daily schedule as if you were working or things were normal.**
* **Be aware that you may develop great rationalization to support procrastinating or other avoidance tactics.**
* **Eat healthy**
* **Exercise, walk, run, ride a bike – but keep moving.**

**YOUR MINDSET IS GOING TO HELP OR HINDER YOU**

Say: “I need to focus my energy on what *I CAN CONTROL,* not on what is beyond my control.

Focus on what you can do, not on what you can’t.

Remember that control over your own life comes from attending to details, each and every day. Having a routine is important. Don’t let yourself gradually sink into depression through inaction.

Connect with people that are important to you. (Family, friends, neighbors, etc.) Just keep on reaching out. Don’t close yourself off from emotional support. Let people know what you need.

Never forget the three powerful resources you always have available to you:

Love, Prayer and Forgiveness.

-------H Jackson Brown Jr.

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